

Zoning Formula and the Party Politics in Nigerian Democracy: a Crossroad for PDP in 2015 Presidential Election

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Abstract

The phenomena of zoning and political parties are high stake politics in Nigeria's democracy. This is because zoning is seen as a mechanism of uniting various diverse people while political parties are the vehicle for realising democracy in Nigeria. Making use of the secondary data, the study examines the issue of zoning/power shift in connection with the party politics with reference to the People Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigerian body politic. It is observed that the emergence of President Jonathan in 2011 presidential election is a dilemma because the 2015 election has to settle the contentious zoning formula of PDP to satisfy every zone, particularly the South East, to avoid an imploding consequence.

1.0 Introduction

Party politics and zoning/power shift are two very important elements of any liberal democracy that no one can brush aside with a wave of the hand in a primordial state like Nigeria. Political parties serve as veritable tool for which democracy is enhanced. Akindele et al (2000) described the importance of the political parties in a liberal democracy when they succinctly posited that:

Political parties encourage stability of the governing process because once elected for a fixed term, the government knows its life span at the corridor of power, and the opposition parties too are aware of this. Thus, both the government and opposition would operate along this political axis.

Party politics is inevitable in any country operating liberal democracy. The practice of modern democracy would be totally impossible without the existence of political parties. In other words, political parties are indispensable features of democratic societies due to the conglomeration of people with similar ideologies under one umbrella. The existence of political parties within a political system breeds various forms of relationship or co-existence within the polity itself. Political parties are essential for democracy to function, as well as for the promotion of peace and stability and the prevention of violent conflict.

The zoning policy/power shift is also important like the political parties in a primordial democratic state like Nigeria. Agbakoba (2011) stressed the importance of zoning in Nigeria when he posited that "the call to abolish zoning seriously underestimates and ignores the complex political character of Nigeria." He posited further that Nigeria is a federation and also a divided society. Federalism is the only known political system that accommodates divisions and diversity; through zoning/power shift the problem of divided society can be abated.

The issue of zoning in party politics dates back to the Second Republic when the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) operated the zoning formula as a strategy for the re-unification of the country after the civil war. Then in 1995, during the General Sanni Abacha Constitutional Conference, Dr. Alex Ekwueme and Chief Emeka Odimegwu Ojukwu, supported by other Southern politicians and members of that conference, championed the cause of rotating the presidency among the six geo-political zones. The division of the country into geo-political zones is for the purpose of rotational presidency after the annulment of June 12 elections (Zik, 2010: 12).

The importance of zoning in Nigeria is also informed because it is a phenomenon used to ensure the continuity and integration of the Nigerian state. The issue of power shift has become a recurring phenomenon in the Nigerian polity.

There has been a dichotomy between the North and the South as regards to power issue in Nigeria. The implication of this is that the North and the South want to be at the theatre of power. Kolawole (1997: 8) has rightly observed that “man is by nature desirous of power. Power is powerful and sweet. Man not only likes to be at the theatre of power, he seeks to be at its centre.” To support the importance of zoning, Antonia Simbine (2002: 34) captured that:

Zoning formula seems to fit into the heterogeneous and federal nature of the Nigerian state, helping to accommodate all groups as much as possible and therefore reducing complaints of domination and or marginalization. To this extent, it helps to make the system more inclusive (of identifiable groups), and therefore more supportive of the democratic culture.

It also serves as an act of balancing conflicting demands and one of the requirements of nomination of candidate in order to embrace the principle of federal character in a cleavage society. Zoning policy as the federal character principle is used for sharing of political offices and appointments. This is seen as the acceptance and perpetuation of Nigeria’s disunited character, causing disaffection and alienation within the rank and file, and sometimes resulting into conflicts within the parties over which group gets what, and/or the value attached to one position or the other (Simbine, 2002: 34). Agbakoba (2011) supported Simbine (2002) when he poignantly posited that:

The 1999 Nigerian Constitution prescribes the Federal Character principle at Section 14. The Federal Character is about inclusion of the six geopolitical zones in the allocation of political and public sector appointments including the office of President. Federal Character has, however, assumed a negative connotation in recent times, as there is a strong perception that people gain offices at the sacrifice of merit. Zoning must be stressed, is the political name for the constitutional principle of federal character.

The current paradigm in Nigerian democracy is the issue of zoning/power shift. The debate has engulfed the Nigerian political circle. The debate is hot to the extent that “some self-appointed godfathers have vowed that unless you come from a particular ethnic group, you cannot aspire for any elected office” (Suswan, 2010). Zoning/power shift has constituted a dilemma in the party politics in Nigeria especially among the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) members.

It is because of the current debate and problematique that the issue of zoning constitutes to the Nigerian polity that the study worth exploring. The intention of this paper is to examine the party politics and zoning in Nigeria: a dilemma for ruling PDP in 2015 presidential election. The relevant questions in this study are: What has been the nature of zoning/power shift in PDP constitution? Is Jonathan not a beneficiary of zoning? If he is, then why double speaking on the issue of zoning by the ruling party? What is likely to be the nature of power shift in 2015? These are the problematiques the study wants to address.

The paper relies on secondary data as a methodology and the paper is structured into five sections. Section one introduces the study, section two examines conceptual clarifications of Power sharing and Party politics, section three looks at the theoretical framework necessary for the study, section four examines the PDP party politics and zoning in the Nigerian body politic as well as PDP zoning and the Igbo presidency while section five concludes the study.

2.0 Conceptual Clarification

Power Sharing Conceptualized

Perusal of literature looks at the concept of power sharing in various perspectives. Political Bureau Report (1987) defined power sharing as a process in which political posts would be shared among top military functionaries and elected or appointed civilians. This definition looks at power sharing as a means of allocating key political posts in a diverse society. Power sharing according to Arend Lijphart (1977: 25) is a set of principles that, when carried out through practices and institutions, provide every relevant identity group or segment in a society representation and decision-making abilities on common issues and a degree of autonomy over issues of importance to the group. Lijphart’s principle of power sharing is pathbreaking in its differentiation of coalescent democracy from majoritarian democracy.

Power sharing according to Sisk (1996) entails practices and institutions that result in wide-based governing coalition generally inclusive all major ethnic groups. Toward this goal, power sharing would involve granting of autonomy, having the presence of federations and proportional electoral systems. In short, in many countries, democracy may be

a long way off, but the international community can exert pressure for the adoption of conflict-regulating practices by non-democratic states, such as a fair treatment of ethnic minorities and ethically diverse security forces. Power-sharing has been successful in some societies, but ineffective in others. Usually, there are certain conditions under which power sharing arrangement work out in achieving success towards resolving ethnic conflict within diverse polity. Among them according to Sisk (1996: XIV) are:

1. They are embraced by a core group of moderate political leaders in ethnic conflicts and these leaders are genuinely representative of the groups they purport to lead.
2. The practices are flexible and allow for equitable distribution of resources
3. They are indigenously arrived at, not agreed on as the result of too-heavy external pressures or short-term, zero-sum expectations of the parties.
4. Parties can gradually eschew the extraordinary measures that some power sharing practices entail and allow a more integrative and liberal form of democracy to evolve.

In societies where power sharing is properly practiced, the basis for it is to minimise as much as possible democratic competition within acceptable boundaries in order to avoid intergroup violence, that would have resulted from differences of opinion along ethnic lines (Benjamin, 2001: 20). Sisk (1996) in his work on Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts talked on the methods of power sharing. He came out with two distinct methods of power sharing in a cleavage societies. These are consociational and integrative methods. In the consociational approach, coalitions are formed after an election by elites who realize that exclusive decision making will make the society ungovernable or who are compelled to do so by prior constitutional arrangements that are based on the same reasoning. In an integrative power-sharing system, coalitions are formed prior to an election either as a coalition of parties in pre-election parts (vote pooling) or by a party with a broad multi-ethnic candidate state. Consociational arrangements formed after elections, Horowitz (1985: 365-395) contends that fragile and tenuous “coalitions of convenience” as opposed to firm and enduring “coalitions of commitment”

In relation to Nigerian politics in this context of the study, zoning is a process of power rotation between the geo-political zone or rotating power between the North and the South. Therefore, misconception of zoning and power rotation within the party politics is not the concept of zoning referred to in the constitution. This is because the party is not one of the entities described in the context of one federal character principle contained in section 14 of the constitution and therefore has no impact on the Federal Character principle laid out in the Constitution.

Party Politics Conceptualized

Party politics has been looked at in different ways by the scholars of democracy and critics of representative democracy. Most of the definitions focus or revolve around the activities of the political parties such as formation of the political party, choice of the party leadership, funding, organization structure and elective principles.

Some critics of representative democracy argue that party politics means that representatives will be forced to follow the party line on issues, rather than either the will of their conscience or constituents (<http://www.websters-on-line-dictionary.org/definition/DEMOCRACY>). This is the view of antagonist of representative democracy.

In the words of Olaniyan cited in Ademola (2009: 2), party politics are activities of political parties in a democratic environment to seek for the control of political offices through stated norms of elections. To this extent, party politics exists when elective principles are present in a state and by implication under a democratic regime which recognizes the legitimate choice of the citizens to select or elect those to represent them in governmental offices. Omilusi (2010: 175) vividly captured party politics as:

activities of formal structure, institutions or organization which compete through electoral process to control the personnel and policies of government, and with the aim of allocating the scarce resources in a state through an institutionalized means or procedure.

He posited further that “the primary objective of party politics is directed towards a single goal of wrestling for governmental or political power.

3.0 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework suitable for this study is the game theoretical model. The game theory owes its origin due to its write up by Emil Borel in 1920s. The theory was further developed by John Von Neu (a mathematician) who used it to deal with classic problem of defining the behaviour of the economic man or the ‘rational’ actor. It was only

after Neumann and Oskar Mogenstern (an economist) published their work “Theory of Games and Economic Behaviour in 1944 that it gained popularity. This explains why the approach is often called the “economic” theory of politics. However, the credit of introducing and to some extent applying the model to Political Science goes to R. Duncan Luce and Howard Raiffa, Martin Shubik and Anatol Rapoport (Olaniyi, 2001: 76).

According to Plano and Riggs (1973:33), game theory involves “a body of thought dealing with rational decision strategies in situations of conflict and competition, when each participant or player seeks to maximise gains and minimize losses.” Abrams (1980: 189) also defined it as:

essentially the study of collective choice situations in which individual decisions depend not only upon individual preferences but upon the preferences of other individuals involved, and upon the outcomes which result from different sets of individual choices.

Based on the two definitions, it is obvious that game theory involves a game of rationality on the parts of actors involved. Also, the theory involves the formulation of strategies of decision. In the words of Kolawole (1997: 270), it emphasizes the fact that a decision of one actor depends on the decisions of other actors, thus it emphasises the interdependence of actors’ decisions.

The game theoretical model has two main categories, namely the zero-sum game and the N-sum game. The zero-sum game type is one where there are two or more players involved, with the ultimate objective of winning employing the rules and strategies associated with the game. The rules of the game include: there can be only one winner, each player is strictly on his own-there are no compensations for losers, etc. in such a situation, each player would seek to play according to the rule, however, as there can be only one winner, who takes the entire prize that is at stake, the frustrations of the prospective losers may cause them to adopt under-hand strategies that are alien to the rule of the game. Thus, violence becomes inevitable. Furthermore, as the outcome would only favour only one player, the other players that are excluded from the prize may turn to violence as the only alternative, either to prevent the winner from enjoying the benefits, or allow for negotiations and concessions (Kehinde, 2007: 100).

On the other hand is the N-sum game category. It also involves two or more players. The rule of the game allows for coalition to be made among or between players. Here, everybody wins, although the degree of the prize varies; it depends on the performance in the game. Here, winner does not take all and the losers do not lose all; the implication here is that everybody is a winner and ‘sharer’ in the gains of the game. The instances of violent behaviour according to Kehinde (2007: 101) are reduced to the barest minimum.

Looking the two categories of the game theoretical model, the former (zero-sum model) is applicable to the present study. Applying the model to the present study, there is more than one contestant vying for the post of president. Each contestant tries as much as possible to adhere to the rules of the game and the winner takes all among the contestants. The winner takes all in form of playing politics in such a way that he wins the presidential primaries and goes on to contest for presidential election. There will not be any compensation for the loser of the game.

4.0 Zoning/Power Rotation and the Party Politics: A Crossroad for PDP in Nigerian Body Politics

Nigeria ushered into democracy in May 29, 1999 after about 16 years of military rule. Prior to handing over date, Nigeria experienced the party politics with different ideologies, manifestoes, and party constitutions. All these serve as policies, guidelines and principles for these political parties to operate in the arena of democracy in Nigeria.

Zoning was a formula adopted by the members of the PDP in 1999 as a mechanism to manage the problem of presidency among the majority ethnic groups in Nigeria. This provision gives the Southerners a sense of belonging after the North had produced the nation’s President/Head of State in quick succession. The PDP decided to zone the presidency to the South to compensate the Southwest due to the annulment of June 12 presidential elections in 1993. The Article 7 subsection 2(c) of the PDP constitution states how elective and party offices should be shared or zoned. The party constitution states poignantly that:

In pursuance of the principle of equity, justice and fairness, the party shall adhere to the policy of rotation and zoning of party and public elective offices, and it shall be enforced by the appropriate executive committee at all levels (PDP Constitution, 1999).

In essence, the section, which was unwritten until it was injected in the PDP's constitution in 2009, states that power, must rotate between the North and South every eight years. It was based on this, some proponents of zoning contend, that former President Olusegun Obasanjo won the presidency in 1999 and was re-elected in 2003. The late Umaru Yar'Adua took over in 2007 to take the turn of the North for another eight years but died in office after protracted illness on May 5, 2010. His death paved the way for Goodluck Jonathan to emerge as President, a development that has thrown up calls on him to jettison the zoning arrangement and contest the 2011 presidential election (Oguntola, 2010).

Since the demise of Umaru Yaradua, there has been a debate on the politics of zoning among the PDP members. Some strongly believe that the power should remain in the North while some believe that zoning is no longer relevant and that it should be jettisoned. The provision of the 1999 constitution allows President Goodluck Jonathan to contest 2011 election irrespective of his tribe.

The issue at hand is that although the parameter of ruling Nigerian state does not restrict him but the issue of zoning is paramount. The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) claims that President Jonathan was a product of zoning and his party had law and the law was applied in 2007 election, therefore the situation must repeat itself in 2011. The National Secretary of the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), Mr. Anthony Sani is one of the people canvassing for stability of zoning in the PDP politics. He believes that the North respects zoning alongside merit. He posited that:

It will be unfair for President Goodluck to say he will contest after succeeding the late President Musa Yar'Adua, more so that the North has not completed a second term that will complete eight years. If the president decides to break the agreement in his party, then it will become a cause of concern. People talked of merit, what is merit? How can we say that in the North, we have more than 70 million people. We cannot produce a single individual (Sani, 2010).

Going by all of these, the PDP wants Nigerians to believe zoning is a foregone issue. But in another breath, events are proving zoning is a reality in the schemes of things in the party. The tussle for the National Chairmanship position is a critical reference to indicate that zoning exists. The post, party sources, insisted has been zoned to the South-East. The critical question at this stage of the study is that why the National Chairman position not zoned to other geo-political zone? Consequently, all the aspirants including Senator Ike Nwachuwu, Bernard Eze, Senator Ken Nnamani, Okwesilieze Nwodo, Senator Pius Anyim, Chukwu Ozichukwu, Mao Oluabunwa and Olisa Metu are all from the South East. Why is it that all aspirants for National chairman are from the southeast not from southwest? Also, the power sharing arrangement in the PDP party politics since 1999 showed that there is zoning/power shift within the party. Key positions such as President, Vice-President, Senate President, Speaker Secretary of the Government of Federation (SGF) and Head of Service (HOS) are zoned to various geo-political zones. The table below shows how power sharing arrangement in PDP has been since 1999.

Table 1: Showing the Power Sharing Arrangement among Geo-political Zones in Nigeria in PDP Party Politics

S/N	Position	Obasanjo Government	Yar'Adua Government	Jonathan Government (May,2010-May, 2011)	Jonathan Government 2011-Till date
1	President	South west	Northwest	South south	South south
2	VP	North east	South south	North west	North west
3	Senate President	South east	North central	North central	North central
4	Speaker	North west	South west	South west	North east
5	SGF	South south	North east	North east	South east
6	HOS	North central	South east	South east	South west

Source: (Alli, 2011) The Nation, Thursday, May 3, 2011.

Most of the party members claimed that there was nothing like zoning but the arrangement in 1999 was an internal affair of the party. The 2011 presidential election brought about a debate on the issues of zoning because the Northern candidate that emerged in 2007 election which was supposed to be used for second term died. The North wants the power to go back to the North to complete its own 8 years. The problem now lies in the fact that his

Vice-President, a southerner succeeded him. The energising nature of power makes Kissinger (1974: 10) to submit that “power is the ultimate aphrodisiac” This assertion must have motivated the successor of demised President, Goodluck Jonathan to contest for 2011 presidential election. He knew it was a game he had to play. He has to play party politics among the stalwart of the PDP and also among the contestants who wish to vie for the post of President. There are contestants from the North. Within the PDP caucus there are strong contestants vying for the post from the North. These are Governor Bukola Saraki, Ibrahim Babangida, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar and Sarah Jibril. At the last minute, Saraki and Babangida stepped down and the presidential ticket was among Jonathan, Abubakar and Jibril.

Among the contestants, primary election was held on 13th January, 2011. The outcome of the primary showed that President Goodluck Jonathan was emerged as the winner at the PDP National Convention primaries election held at Eagle Square, Abuja. The result is shown below:

Table 2: Showing the PDP 2011 Presidential Primaries Election Result
 Source: Next, Thursday, July 28, 2011

State	Jonathan	Atiku	Jubril	Total
Abia	80	1	-	81
Adamawa	76	31	-	107
Akwa-Ibom	141	-	-	141
Anambra	47	8	-	55
Bauchi	46	44	-	90
Bayelsa	67	-	-	67
Benue	72	15	-	87
Borno	33	26	-	59
Cross-River	105	-	-	105
Delta	114	7	-	121
Ebonyi	82	2	-	84
Edo	60	-	-	60
Ekiti	76	1	-	77
Enugu	89	9	-	98
Gombe	55	18	-	73
Imo	125	3	-	128
Jigawa	100	17	-	117
Kaduna	82	41	-	123
Kano	21	99	-	120
Katsina	147	11	-	158
Kebbi	33	44	-	77
Kogi	84	24	-	108
Kwara	61	26	1	88
Lagos	52	3	-	55
Nasarawa	53	8	-	61
Niger	94	16	-	110
Ogun	80	3	-	83
Ondo	69	6	-	75
Osun	99	1	-	100
Oyo	107	0	-	107
Plateau	70	2	-	72
River	128	2	-	130
Sokoto	32	84	-	116
Taraba	62	16	-	78
Yobe	29	20	-	49
Zamfara	7	70	-	77
FCT	24	3	-	27
Total	2,736	805	1	3,542

The analysis of this PDP primaries showed that the total number of delegates was 3,542. President Jonathan pooled 2,736 votes representing 81.46% of the entire total vote cast by the delegates in all the states of the federal including FCT. Atiku received 805 votes representing 18.51% while Jibril got 1 vote amounting to 0.03% of the total vote cast. The result depicted a landslide victory for Jonathan and he was declared a PDP Presidential flag bearer by the Chief Returning Officer of the party, Prof. Tunde Adeniran.

The success of Jonathan is attributed to a combination of factors. These according to (Babalola, 2011: 3) are the “power of incumbency, governors’ endorsement, political horse-trading and uncoordinated opposition.” He notes further that Jonathan, by self-confession, is not a politician but he apparently understood the game enough to quietly fight it stage-by-stage. While Abubakar, his main rival and more politically-experienced former vice-president, held on to the zoning and ethnic campaign, Jonathan used the power of incumbency to get his party to pronounce him as being qualified to run.

Also, while Abubakar was busy seeking the endorsement of the northern political elite as their candidate, Jonathan went after the governors on the platform of the PDP. At the meeting he held with the governors, Jonathan used the strategy of asking the governors to underscore their support by endorsing him and desist from holding secret meetings with Abubakar. The implication of this is that endorsement by the governors is almost an assurance that delegates from states control by the party will vote for Jonathan. The outcome of the primary election gave Jonathan a ticket to run for presidential election under the platform of the PDP.

Before the 2011 presidential election was held, President Jonathan met the Northern Political Leaders Forum (NPLF) for support. A forum consists of Northern power stalwarts and brokers which is led by Mallam Adamu Ciroma. The talks between President Jonathan and the NPLF collapsed because NPLF gave him two demands to meet. The demands are: a writing undertaking that he would spend only a term in office and ensure that power shifts to the North in 2015 (Alli, 2011: 2). Jonathan refused to accede to the two demands. As a result of not reaching consensus on the matter, President Jonathan rebuffed the NPLF leaders over these demands and decided to get fresh inroad into the North through alternative power brokers and northern groups. In order to stop President Jonathan, there were also plots by opposition parties and the northern power stalwart to defeat the PDP in the election. The plot was designed in such a way that the PDP would not get the required number of votes in the North-West, which had 18.9 million voters. Therefore, fulfilling the requirement number of votes in 24 states (two-thirds) would be difficult.

The 2011 presidential election which was held on 19th April, 2011 showed that the Northern part of Nigeria wanted power back to the North. The influence of the PDP was highly undermined by the growing influence and assertion of the CPC in these following states: Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, Gombe, Borno, Bauchi, Jigawa, Niger, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara states. Also, when the results of the presidential election were announced crisis broke out in some part of the North which led to burning of houses and churches, maiming, killing etc. The murderous riots in parts of northern Nigeria, following the results of the presidential polls according to Akinola (2011: 68), “bespeak deep-seated divisions in the Nigerian polity.”

The 2011 presidential election had been held. The PDP under flag bearer of President Jonathan won. He has been given a mandate to rule Nigerian state for the next four years. The implication of this is that his tenure ends in May 29, 2015. The crossroad here is that will the power rotates back to the North or still remains in the South? This is an issue that the party needs to address. President Jonathan has reserved on the issue of power rotation/zoning presidency to the North in 2015 but canvassing for an amendment of 4years to 6years single term in the Nigerian constitution. If it works, then power may not go back to the North as canvassing by the Northerners. If this doesn’t work out as planned by President Jonathan, is he going to contest under the platform of another party? The words of Lord Acton cited in Rogow and Lasswell, (1963: 4) have been observed that “power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost bad men, even when they exercise influence”. He might not want to leave the corridor of power by 2015. If he doesn’t leave and he wants to contest for the second term, the critical question is that will the PDP not be in disarray? Or will Nigeria’s democracy be truncated? The Igbo and the Hausa are also clamouring for Presidency. The Igbo has been saying that it is the turn of Igbo tribe to produce executive president because it is the only zone that has not produced president since 1960. It is at this stage the study will examine the stand of Igbo tribe and the presidency in 2015 election.

5.0 PDP Zoning and the Igbo Presidency in 2015 Election

The PDP leadership must be concerned with the continued relevance of the party currently and particularly in 2015, depending on how it plays its zoning games as it affects the Southeast geopolitical zone. One is curious to know how party will harmonize its position to satisfy the quest (agitation?) of the Igbo claim to the presidency of the Nigerian federation. It has been observed that zoning has become so controversial in the Nigerian polity since 1999 and the current high degree of political temperature is capable of imploding the PDP as a party if care is not applied. Cyprian Ajah (2011) when observing the political tension of zoning in PDP party politics submitted that “if the leadership does not act fast, the crisis of zoning may give the country a bad name”.

The Igbo of the South East geopolitical zone has been insistent, and vehemently so, that the presidency should be rotated to them in 2015, particularly now that it is obvious they remain the only zone to produce not to have produced an executive president of Nigeria since independence in 1960. Dr. Alex Ekwueme, the Second Republic Vice President, is in the fray of South East PDP, demanding for an Igbo president in 2015.

Towards the realization of the Igbo presidential candidature in 2015, Prof. Chinedu Nebo, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, has asked the Igbo to reject any arrangement that would scheme them out of the presidency in 2015. He poignantly asserted that:

It is fair that by 2015, a citizen of Igbo extraction should be the President of Nigeria. This demand, again, is not negotiable, but the process is. This calls for an intelligent think-thank that should guide Ndigbo in their negotiation with the north and the South-South to ensure that 2015 Igbo presidency is realized. The Igbo should reject any arrangement that denies them (or has the potential to deny them) the presidency in 2015 (Obe and Ubabukoh, 2010).

As it was clearly stated above that the Igbo presidency “is not negotiable, but the process is.” The process here implies that a person of an Igbo extraction fielded at the party primary as a presidential candidate. If the political party caucus allows or chooses an Igbo candidate as the party’s presidential flag bearer, then one major hurdle is scaled. But what demagogues should know is that it was not PDP per se that won the 2011 presidential election, Goodluck Jonathan did purely on a personal merit platform. In 2015, the Igbo politicians and people will have a person, a personality that could win the heart and mind of both young and old, then the office of the president will be theirs. But they must be prepare to confront the centrifugal forces that are ready to destabilize the country as witnessed in the aftermath of the Jonathan’s victory in 2011, particularly in the northern axis.

Lastly, the negotiation will be a tough one in many respects. But two major areas are critical: first, the Igbo “think thank” must be able to convince the south west to discard the idea of targeting the office of Vice-President in 2015, to support the North for President. Second, they must be able to convince the South South not to pressurize Jonathan to run for second term. More importantly, Jonathan himself must be honest and credible enough to play “Mandela” and serve only one term (the mooted single term of 6 years, notwithstanding). And of course, the North must tread the path of fairness and justice to support the South East.

6.0 Conclusion

The study has examined the zoning formula and the PDP party politics in Nigeria’s fourth republic. The study was able to identify a crossroad for PDP in producing a candidate that would be a successor of President Goodluck Jonathan in 2015 because the agreement was jettisoned in 2011 as a result the endorsement of the President Jonathan as a flag bearer of the ruling party (PDP). It was observed that President Jonathan had won 2011 presidential election. The crossroad here is that is he going to rule for another 8years? The Northern Nigeria felt they were being short changed in 2011 for not producing president for another 4-year term to complete the remaining term. Therefore, the arrangement had been truncated by the members through the power of incumbency of the President Jonathan.

The northern people and the ethnic group such as Arewa Consultative Forum have vowed that power must go back to the North in the year 2015 and other sectional group such as Ohanaeze Ndigbo wants the power to be shifted to the south eastern of Nigeria. It was observed by the PDP members that power would be rotated between the North and the South after each part has completed its 8years. Although the arrangement was unwritten but the members supposed to play the game according to the rule and this must be strictly adherence to. It must be remembered that “the longer democracy persists, the more it imposes its own rhythms and deadlines on those who have agreed to play by its rules of competition and cooperation” (Schmitter and Santiso, 1998: 71). The truism of the fact is that if the

North and the South (especially South east) are not careful, PDP as a party may be imploded and democracy may be truncated.

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